

Approved Audits/Applications Committee 11/25/08

Organization Name: Missoula Convention and Visitors Bureau

Project Name: MP08/09: Opportunity
Meet Me In Missoula Winter Regional
Campaign

Approval Requested

 X Final

 Preliminary

Application Completed by: Barbara Neilan, Executive Director

Please explain the need for this project as well as a clear overview of the concept of the project. Narrative must provide enough details that those reviewing the application can comprehend or visualize the full scope of the project. Narrative should be a full overview, yet explicit and to the point.

Meet Me In Missoula is a promotional campaign to invite friends and family to Missoula for a cultural weekend beginning the evening of December 5th and ending the evening of December 7, 2008. During these four days numerous and varied cultural events will be taking place in Missoula, including but not limited to: First Friday Gallery Night; MCT Community Theatre presentation of *Nuncrackers*; UM Drama/Dance presentation of Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*; Missoula Symphony Holiday Pops Concert; 10th Annual Festival of Trees; Keith Anderson in concert at the historic Wilma Theater; Carl Tyler Chevrolet Grizzly Basketball Classic; University Center Holiday Craft Fair; Holiday at Home Tour; International Choral Festival Fundraising Concert; and Storyhill at the Masquer Theatre. These events and more are being promoted through a partnership between the Missoula Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Missoula Cultural Council and The Missoula Downtown Association and through partnerships with many of the area cultural organizations and retail businesses.

The purpose is to celebrate the cultural community of Missoula, increase visitors and revenue for the Missoula business community and to showcase Missoula as a Western Montana cultural gem. We are asking the cultural organizations and private business partners to track their customers by zip code over the three days in order to determine a baseline of attendance. This is the second Meet Me In Missoula weekend – the first being held in May 2008. It is a unique public-private partnership which will showcase not only the region's most talented artists (both fine and performing arts) but also emphasize family fun, and expose our region to the wonderful cultural opportunities that make Missoula so unique.

The MCVB will aid in the regional advertising of this event, concentrating on Missoula drive-markets, by placing the following print:

- A ½ page, full color advertisement in the November and 1/8 page, black and white advertisement in the December Lively Times, a monthly arts and entertainment newspaper with a circulation of 20,000 throughout Montana, distributed through 550 drop locations from Miles City to the Flathead and downtown Spokane locations. Lively Times is also received via mail by 250 subscribers, as well as 150 comp. subscriptions to non-profit organizations.
- A full color, double truck ad in the Kalispell Interlake Intertainer. The Intertainer has a circulation of 21,500 in Northwestern Montana, including Libby, Eureka, Kalispell, Columbia Falls, Whitefish, Bigfork, and Polson. This publication will reach visitors to the Glacier Park area. An extra 1,000 are placed in hotel rooms throughout the circulation area.
- Two 1/2 page, full color advertisements in The Bozone Entertainment calendar. The Bozone reaches over 35,000 readers monthly. 7,500 copies are distributed twice monthly covering Southwest Montana, including visitors to Yellowstone Park. Distribution points include all Bozeman hotels, restaurants, coffee shops, gas stations, etc.
- Two ¼ page, black and white ad in the Coeur d'Alene Press Entertainer. The Press circulation is 39,014 and covers all of Kootenai County, including 95% of all occupied hotel rooms within the County, and 40.7% of all adults in North Idaho. This buy will also include a one week banner ad on the CDAPress.com website.
- A ¼ page, full color ad in the Coeur d'Alene Press, Sunday edition, which reaches 46,829 households (117,072 readers) in Coeur d'Alene, Post Falls, Sandpoint, Priest River, Bonners
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- Ferry, Shoshone and Columbia Basin. This buy will also include a one week banner ad on CDAPress.com which receives 871,378 page views from 243,672 unique visitors each month.
- A ½ page full color ad in the Spokesman Review, Awayfinder, November edition a quarterly travel magazine that is circulated in the Sunday Spokesman Review to over 122,000 households in Spokane County, north Idaho and Eastern Washington. It also appears online at the Awayfinderonline.com website for three months, and an additional 10,000 copies distributed in various locations such as the local Chambers of Commerce, and travel businesses.

Develop Objectives

The purpose of this step is to establish realistic, achievable objectives and assess the feasibility of your project in relation to stated objectives. Your objectives should be specific, measurable and realistic.

- A. Increase Room Nights By 3%.** Although lodging sales for Missoula increased 33% between 2002-2007, the increase is less than either the Glacier Country Regional increase of 47% or the State increase of 42% over this same time period. Although the summer months average a 90+% occupancy, the months of December and January average as low as 40%, leaving Missoula with an annual average occupancy rate of 62.5-63.5%. During this time period three new motels have opened in Missoula adding 338 new rooms to Missoula's inventory. This summer a new extended stay motel will be added increasing that room count by another 101 rooms.
- C. Education.** Education of visitors to raise awareness of Missoula as a destination, the community to increase awareness of tourism and its economic effects, and professional development of key MCVB personnel.

Identify the portions of your marketing plan which support this project.

Marketing Goals:

A.3. The Missoula CVB will partner with the Missoula International Airport, the Missoula Cultural Council, the Missoula Downtown Association, Southgate Mall, the Missoula Area Economic Development Corporation, the University of Montana and other local organizations and businesses to help promote 3-4 events in Missoula, with an emphasis on off peak/shoulder seasons. The MCVB will specifically target cultural, sporting and entertainment events, and will help establish unique winter events. These events will be advertised to Missoula's direct flight and drive markets.

A.8. The MCVB will continue to market cooperatively with Travel Montana, Glacier Country Regional Tourism Commission, other tourism organizations and key non-profits and private businesses to promote Missoula to individual and group travelers, meeting planners, and key niche market travelers (such as cultural, winter, destination weddings, girlfriend getaways, etc.).

Geographic Markets:

- The states immediately surrounding Montana and Canada.
- Residents from other parts of Montana.

Demographic Markets:

- Individual Travelers
- Group Gatherings and Tours

Does this project support the Strategic Plan? Yes No

If so, describe how:

Goal 1: Increase four season revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors

1.1: Implement highly targeted consumer advertising and promotion campaigns, based on strategic marketing plans and track/report results.

1.1.a. Expand public-private marketing partnerships with tourism businesses and attractions

1.2: Promote Montana to targeted groups and events, emphasizing off-peak season.

1.3: Work collaboratively with other tourism marketing partners to plan and implement priority marketing efforts.

Goal 4: Enhance and preserve Montana's culture and history (historic sites, museums, art, music, etc.).

4.1: Promote Montana's existing historic and cultural assets for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

4.1.a Use local historic/cultural/tribal attractions as venues for conferences, events and educational seminars.

Goal 5: Support appropriate tourism business growth, including new tourism products and services, for target customer markets.

5.1: Cultivate opportunities to leverage private and public dollars to create tourism products and attract new tourist markets.

5.1.a Create vacation packages, and develop theme itineraries, designed for off-peak season niche markets targeted by promotion efforts.

Goal 10: Build an effective "team" to implement the Strategic Plan, and report results.

10.2: Create public/private/tribal partnerships for cooperative project implementation.

You may put additional information on the back if necessary.

Please complete the appropriate project pages attached. If complete information is not available at the time of the application, it will be necessary to submit these details to the Audits/Applications Committee for final approval, prior to commitment of funds.

Detail information below: Yes No

Project Budget:

All funds for this project are from accommodations tax.

Print Placement \$ 5,044.

TOTAL for project \$ 5,044.